GT 3/13/04

Dobson out to quell gay unions

Focus founder says marriages could destroy families, nations

By PAUL ASAY
THE GAZETTE

James Dobson, head of the Christian ministry Focus on the Family, exhorted evangelical leaders Friday to do more to defend traditional marriage.

"Western civilization hangs on this issue," he told the National Association of Evangelicals on Friday morning at Focus on the Family's Colorado Springs headquarters. "Countries cannot be stronger than the strength of their families. We're messing with it. We're going to redefine it. We don't know what the implications of that are."

JAMES DOBSON: Says traditional marriage needs support.

Dobson told NAE members that issues such as same-sex unions are moral, not political, and that evangelicals must be forceful in voicing their beliefs.

"I almost get on my knees symbolically and beg you all to share with your colleagues the importance of defending the righteousness in the culture," he said.

"If we do not do our job now, it will not matter in a year or two."

Dobson's audience was enthusiastic. The NAE supports a federal marriage amendment sponsored by Congresswoman Marilyn Musgrave, R-Colo., to define marriage as between one man and one woman.

A spokesman for a gay and lesbian advocacy group in Denver disputed Dobson's view that same-sex marriage threatens society.

"Same-sex couples have been forming families for decades," said Michael Brewer, public policy director for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center of Colorado in Denver. "They live, work, play and pay taxes just as heterosexual couples do. It can only strengthen the fabric of society and marriage by providing the broadest possible legal and social safety net to those families."

Dobson talked primarily about issues surrounding homosexuality to his NAE audience, and said that unless an amendment is enacted, same-sex unions will lead to polygamy and other unorthodox unions.

If marriage is simply a matter of how a judge defines rights, he said, then "how in the world do you tell three men and two women they don't have the same rights? ... How do you tell a father and a daughter that they can't marry? Or a man and his donkey?"

The result would be fractured families and children forced to deal with too much instability.

"When the family disintegrates, children don't do well," he said. "And what we're about to do is just rip the family to shreds, and the implications of it are awesome."

"These arguments have been made in the past when the vote was given to women and interracial marriage was declared unconstitutional," Brewer said.

Dobson said that the drive for traditional marriage has lost some ground. The only way to preserve traditional marriage, Dobson said, is to induce evangelical churches to take the lead and pressure Congress to pass the constitutional amendment. If Congress approves the amendment, it still must be approved by 75 percent of state legislatures.

A strong show of public support, Dobson said, is crucial for the amendment's success.

"This is the climax," he said. "This is the tsunami. And I have to tell you all that you're the only hope for it."

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sult in a fix that has broad support in the General Assembly, even if the final plan is nothing like those proposed Friday by Owens.

"I'd like to fix the problem rather than pass it on to our successors," said House Majority Leader Andrews Romanoff, D-Denver. "But I consider it a success that we are even talking about solutions to the problem. Several months ago, we were debating whether there was a problem."

Owens made it clear he still is open to negotiations about the issue and said he is optimistic "we may be able to put something on the ballot this November that addresses both TABOR and Amendment 23."

NELSON: Jonathan and Mona, Fountain, a girl, Feb. 23.

FELTEN: Thomas and Talisa, Colorado Springs, a girl, Feb. 24.

COULTER: James and Emily, Fountain, a girl, Feb. 24.

SERVICES

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eral Services.

Francis "Buck" Miller
Visitation, 4 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Swan Law Funeral Directors. Burial, Evergreen Cemetery.

Kathryn Z. Myers
Memorial services, 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, First Congregational Church, 20 E. St. Vrain. Swan Law Funeral Directors.

Angelo Radice
Memorial services, 3:30 p.m. Monday, Village at Skyline, 2635 Patriot Heights. Nolan Funeral Home.

Martha E. Randall
Memorial services, 11 a.m. Tuesday, The Church at Woodmoor, 18125 Furrow Road, Monument. Swan Law Funeral Directors.

Robert Albert Robbeloth
Graveside services, 11 a.m. Tuesday, Fort Logan National Cemetery. Nolan Funeral Home.

Juan "Johnny" Valdez
Memorial services, 11 a.m. today, St. Mary's Cathedral, 22 W. Kiowa St. Cappadona's Alternative Funeral Services.

Ernest Villegas
Graveside services, 10 a.m. today, Memorial Gardens Cemetery. Memorial Gardens Cemetery and Funeral Home.

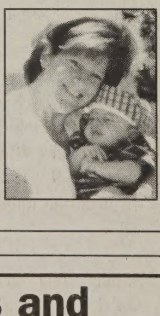
Nora Kay Voss
Services, 1 p.m. Sunday, Florissant Granger Hall, Florissant. Mountain View Mortuary.

William C. Wilson
Memorial Mass, 3 p.m. Tuesday, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 2030 W. Colorado Ave. Nolan Funeral Home.

Happy Birthday BERRY!

miss your lovely smile, great
n friendship and contagious
the three of us struggle
find comfort and the strength
from your constant presence.
over the rainbow.

Bill, Tyler, and Joe



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aths Services and Life Tributes

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obituaries or life tributes are placed through Division. The length and content of life the discretion of the family of the deceased, l be published in a standard print format.

r next day publication of a life tribute is noon n Saturday. The Advertising Division is closed olidays. E-mail to obits@gazette.com, fax to or deliver to our offices at 30 S. Prospect St. rmally is submitted for the family by a funeral omitted directly by the family, photo contact information and prepayment are 719-636-0101 for more information.

ed on a minimum of 50 words as follows: up $0.70 per word; 100-199 words, $0.66 per than 200 words, $0.62 per word. There is a include a photograph.